

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 104836

FOLLOWING GENEVA 3437 SENT ACTION SECSTATE INFO SECDEF
JCS NEW YORK TEL AVIV MAY 5; REPEATED TO YOU QUOTE

C O N F I D E N T I A L GENEVA 3437

DOD ALSO PASS TO AF/JA, NAVY JAG, DAJA-IA, DCPA

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: ICRC PARM PFOR
SUBJECT: DIPLOMATIC CONFERENCE ON INTERNATIONAL HUMANITARIAN LAW--
RED SHIELD AMENDMENT

1. WESTERN EUROPEANS AND OTHERS (WEO) GROUP MET MAY 4
TO CONSIDER WHAT VOTING PATTERN MIGHT DEVELOP IF ISRAEL
PRESSED RED SHIELD AMENDMENT TO A VOTE. ISRAEL WILL
SUBMIT AMENDMENT NEXT WEEK. WEO'S UNANIMOUSLY EXPRESSED
THEIR HOPES THAT RED SHIELD AMENDMENT NOT BE PUT TO VOTE.
EC-9 ADVISED THAT THEY WOULD ABSTAIN; REST OF WEOS
INDICATED THEY WOULD ALSO ABSTAIN, EXCEPT FOR AUSTRALIA
AND US. AUSTRALIA ALSO EXPRESSED HOPE THIS NOT BE PUT
TO VOTE. NORWAY INDICATED THAT IT HAD ORIGINALLY
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PLANNED ON SUPPORTING AMENDMENT IF IT PUT TO VOTE,
BUT IN VIEW OF GENERAL LACK OF SUPPORT IN WEOS NORWEGIAN
DELEGATION WILL SEEK NEW INSTRUCTIONS. WE EXPECT
NORWAY WOULD ALSO ABSTAIN. OF WEOS, ONLY US AND
AUSTRALIA NOW COMMITTED TO SUPPORTING AMENDMENT. IN
ADDITION, ISRAEL CLAIMS 9 SOLID VOTES FROM LATIN
GROUP AND PERHAPS TWO OTHERS IN SUPPORT OF AMENDMENT.

2. WE HAVE CANVASSED ARAB GROUP AND HAVE LEARNED THAT ARABS PLAN VOCIFEROUS AND PROBABLY VITUPERATIVE CAMPAIGN AGAINST AMENDMENT. THERE IS NO POSSIBILITY ARABS MIGHT SIMPLY LET AMENDMENT PASS, REGARDLESS OF ANY HUMANITARIAN ASPECTS OR FACT THAT ADOPTION OF RESOLUTION WOULD PLACE ISRAEL IN DILEMMA OF POSSIBLY HAVING TO BECOME A PARTY TO A PROTOCOL IT DOES NOT LIKE. ARAB POSITION IS ONE OF TOTAL INTRANSIGENCE, REGARDLESS OF WHATEVER GOODWILL MIGHT HAVE BEEN DEVELOPED THROUGH SUCCESSFUL ARTICLE 42 COMPROMISE.

3. WE CONVEYED WEO REACTION TO CHIEF ISRAELI DELEGATE ON MAY 5. HE WILL REPORT RESULTS TO TEL AVIV AND SEEK INSTRUCTIONS. ISRAELI DELEGATE NOTED THAT ISRAEL AHD APPROACHED WESTERN EUROPEAN GROUP CAPTIALS ON MORNING OF MAY 4 IN RENEWED EFFORT FOR FURTHER SUPPORT FOR AMENDMENT. THERE WOULD NOT HAVE BEEN SUFFICIENT TIME FOR NEW INSTRUCTIONS TO HAVE BEEN RECEIVED PRIOR TO LATE MAY 4 WEO MEETING, IF ANY NEW INSTRUCTIIONS WERE FORTHCOMING.

4. COMMENT: IT APPEARS TO US THAT ISRAEL WILL MOST LIKELY BE CONDEMNED IN WORLD HEALTH ASSEMBLY NOW IN SESSION, ANTI-ISRAELI RESOLUTION MAY BE PRESENTED AT JUNE MEETING OF INTERNATIONAL LABOR ORGANIZATION. WE ARE CONCERNED WITH EFFECTS THREE RAPID ISRAELI DEFEATS IN SEPARATE INTERNATIONAL FORUMS MIGHTHAVE ON PUBLIC OPINION IN ISRAEL AND ELSEWHERE. WE SEE NO VALUE TO CONFIDENTIAL

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PUSHING RED SHIELD AMENDMENT TO VOTE SINCE IT CANNOT PASS. WE DISAGREE WITH ISRAELI DELEGATION ASSESSMENT THAT THEY HAVE NOTHING TO LOSE. CERTAINLY THE EFFECTS OF ONE OR MORE ISRAELI DEFEATS IN INTERNATIONAL MEETINGS WOULD DO NOTHING TO FURTHER THE CAUSE OF PEACE IN THE MIDDLE EAST. WE WOULD APPRECIATE DEPARTMENT'S ASSESSMENT; WE RECOMMEND SOME CONSIDERATION BE GIVEN TO APPROACHING ISRAELI GOVERNMENT IN TEL AVIV AND WASHINGTON IN ORDER TO PLACE RED SHIELD AMENDMENT IN BROADER PEERSPECTIVE, AND AKS THEM NOT TO PUSH IT TO A VOTE. SORENSON UNQUOTE CHRISTOPHER

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